

# The Builder.

No. CCCCLXXXIII.

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1852.



HERE is no longer an "Architectural Room," we are sorry to say, set forth in the Royal Academy's Catalogue. The few designs that are exhibited on the present occasion are placed in the apartment formerly appropriated to them (not in the octagon room as last year), but its old title is discontinued, and it stands simply as "North Room." Nor, indeed, would the first appellation be correct, seeing that Architecture occupies but a small part of the space. There are but seventy-seven drawings, which can be claimed for her, the majority of them of small importance. Several of the principal works illustrated have been made public in our own pages or elsewhere; for example, 1178, "Geometrical Elevation of the Iron Gates leading into the Forecourt of the British Museum," by Mr. S. Smitke, A.R.A. an excellent drawing; 1192, "The Royal Freemasons' Female Charity Schools," by Mr. P. C. Hardwick; and others. The latter gentleman also exhibits design for the "Interior of the Coffee Room, Great Western Hotel," 1197; and 1175, "The College of St. Columba, near Dublin, with the proposed additional Buildings," the latter an appropriate design, admirably well set forth. In the coffee-room, the pendentive bracketing of the ceiling springs from female figures on corbels. Mr. J. Thomas exhibits a "Design for Sculpture to the Pediment," for the same enormous hotel now being executed, representing England, with Commerce and Science receiving the various nations. The hotel itself has now taken a shape, and, with its two towers, looks, as you approach it from the railway, like some enormous French palace. The bravery of one who will furnish and fit up such an establishment as this on speculation, cannot but excite wonder. "The Abbey Gateway and Houses about to be erected by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, in the Broad Sanctuary" (1174), by Mr. Scott, will form a bold pile of domestic Gothic buildings, and make more apparent the incongruity in Wren's additions to Westminster Abbey than it is now. The houses have high "stepped gables." There is a very good design by Mr. Clutton (1154), for a "Gate-house and domestic Chapel," about to be built near the last, for the National Society's Training Institutions. It is in the Decorated style, and has a staircase at one side corbelled out over the footpath. 1199 shows the selected design for "The Cambridge Military Asylum, now erecting at Kingston-on-Thames," by Mr. Allom. The front is of red and white brick, in the mixed style which has been adopted by the author of it in some other buildings, and promises to be a creditable work. The usual amount of vexation, annoyance, and ignorance—if nothing worse—has not been wanting in the competition wherein this design was selected.

Of the designs which were submitted in competition for the proposed new Waxchandler's Hall, Gresham-street, City, two are here, namely, 1149, by Mr. R. M. Phipson

(who has also an elaborate drawing of the interior of St. Peter's Mancroft, Norwich, now being restored by him), and 1234, by Wadmire and Mason, the first Italian, the second Perpendicular, and neither very characteristic. We must say here, that we have received several additional letters on the subject of this competition, but do not find ourselves in a position to publish any charges. The facts are simply these. The designs submitted were referred to Mr. C. Fowler, who is connected with the company, and on his report three were selected for reward. Ultimately, however, it seems the company decided on not carrying out either of these designs, but placed the matter in Mr. Fowler's hands, and that gentleman is now making fresh plans.

1202 is a design for, what we have often suggested, "Improved Dwellings for Clerks, Professional Men of moderate Means," intended to combine the economy of apartments with the privacy and convenience of self-contained houses, but it is so placed that examination is out of the question.

"Theberton Hall, Suffolk," by Mr. Cottingham, 1156, has more statuary in the grounds, according to the drawings, than usual.

In Mr. Robinson's prize "Design for a Marine Palace" (1163), the wings are connected by an arcade over an arched opening. The disagreeable effect of columns rising over an opening is seen in the river front of Somerset House. In 1165 we have six restorations in one frame, recently carried out by Mr. C. J. Clarke. The same architect also exhibits the design for Cokermouth Church, which, after many struggles, is now in course of erection. It is Decorated, and has a lofty tower and spire at the crux. This position for the tower, which is now being adopted very generally, is not advantageous to the interior distribution in a Protestant church. The "Proposed Church in Maida Vale" (1198), which has this same arrangement, is singularly ugly. "The Château now erecting at Cannes," by Mr. T. Smith, is castellated, with five large towers, but has nothing out of the common beyond its size, and the curious little figures stepping into air, which are under the angles of the marchicolated parapets. "The Town House now erecting in the Queen's-road, Kensington," for the Earl of Harrington (1181), is flat and ugly, not worthy of Mr. C. J. Richardson. Mr. Street, in a sketch of the doorway of the Steeple about to be erected to the memory of the Rev. J. G. Lonsdale, shows the intention of introducing coloured materials in the construction,—brown and blue. M. Horeau, who seems to have invaded England, repeats in small the view of the principal works executed by him which he had at the "Architectural Exhibition" in Regent-street. No. 1211, "A Villa Residence, Esher, Surrey," by Mr. Roumieu, has a touch of originality which is agreeable, but has not benefited much by the removal of the window tax. Why has Mr. Burges, in his "Restoration of the Shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey," shown "mass" going on? Is one to entail the other.

The general collection is but of average merit, though it contains many excellent pictures. Of these hereafter. The works of art exhibited are 1,492 in number, one hundred more than there were last year; and if to these we add 544 in the British Institution; 670 in the Suffolk-street Gallery; 391 in the Portland

Gallery; 660 in the two water-colour exhibitions; and about 300 in the exhibition of sketches recently closed, we have a grand total of 3,747 new works of art produced with a very few exceptions by British artists within the year, without reckoning some acres of panorama-painting, at least a thousand pictures rejected, and some thousands of book-illustrations.

At the dinner given on the 1st inst. both Lord Derby and the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed more interest in the progress of the arts than usual: what they intend to do towards effecting it yet remains to be seen. "I am aware," said Lord Derby, "that in such an assembly I can ask for no sympathy or political concurrence, but I am quite sure there is one support which will be afforded to any Administration by this assembly, and by the great and rapidly growing majority of the people of this country, namely, that you will aid them in the attempt they may make by any support they can give to encourage the growing taste for the fine arts, to which, after having been long dormant, this country is at last happily awakening. And, whatever may be the term of duration of the Government to which I am proud to belong, I may venture to indulge the hope—and I believe I shall be supported by political friends and opponents—that we may have an opportunity of testifying our goodwill to a pleasing and delightful art by providing a more fitting and more adequate locality for those treasures of ancient and modern art which of late years this country has been rapidly accumulating, and for the more rapid accumulation of which little more is wanting than that which I hope Government may have it in their power to provide—a more suitable space for their accommodation." Let us indulge in the hope, echoed Mr. Disraeli (and we adopt the expression), that a palace may arise in this great metropolis, worthy of the arts, worthy of the admiration of the foreigner, worthy of this mighty people, as the becoming emporium where all the genius and inventions of man may be centred and celebrated.

## ON THE NECESSITY OF AN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION ON THE PART OF THE PUBLIC.

IN all times but our own, all ornamentation resulted from architecture: in the present age we have no guiding principle in its design or unity in its application: the architect has abandoned to inferior hands that which was his especial province. There are two other points I would endeavour to establish,—first, that the education of our architects must undergo some change before we can hope that architecture and its attendant arts shall faithfully represent the wants, feelings, and faculties of our time; and, secondly, that this result can never be effectually obtained till a much higher amount of art-knowledge exists in us as a nation.

How is any change for the better to be brought about? It is certain that the production of a national style must be, as it ever has been, a work of slow development; yet, if never attempted, the problem never can be solved.

It seems to me,—now that we have so many schools devoted to the improvement of design as applied to manufactures, and that a movement in this direction, aided by this Society, is receiving a fresh impulse,—that if the Government were to undertake to gather together all the records of the past, and would disseminate that knowledge with correct prin-

\* The following formed part of a lecture delivered at the Society of Arts on the 25th of April.